



KETTLE MORaine SCHOOL DISTRICT

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June 4, 2018

Dear members of the Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding:

Thank you for your service. I appreciate the time and energy you have spent in service to our state as you conducted the various hearings. I also appreciate the complexity and difficulty of the assignment you have accepted. When I testified in front of you at Oshkosh I was asked if I felt my community understood the funding of schools and I responded, "No." The funding of schools in Wisconsin is very complicated and difficult for people to understand. I have held two meetings with my community in the past two months. Approximately 40-50 people attended in total. They don't understand and they are confused. I have been told that you have received correspondence from residents of Kettle Moraine, likely stemming from my conversations. Thank you for listening to them. They care about their schools, just as you do. We the residents of Kettle Moraine have a very difficult dilemma that faces us.

I recognize that you will not likely be able to address the gross funding differences in Waukesha County that have existed for the past 25 years. Thank you for listening to the facts that I shared and for empathizing with our challenges. I am hopeful that as you listened across the state, themes for improvement emerged that can be brought forward.

I support the SAA recommendations John Forester shared. In particular I urge you to give consideration to the hardship that is experienced by declining enrollment districts. Please work to lessen the impact on funding that occurs when student enrollments drop. Similar to the logic that is used to support open enrollment in and out, consider lessening the amount lost per student when membership declines.

I also ask you to consider removing referenda when calculating state aid. When local residents elect to support their school district through a referendum, they shouldn't be penalized by having their state aid reduced. Likewise when a community votes to increase their funding it shouldn't be paid for by others. Due to our high property values and below state and county average revenue limit, any increase in revenue authority that our community approves through a referendum will result in a loss of state aid, further increasing the tax burden on local property owners who are trying to compete with districts funded at significantly higher levels.

In closing please know that I sincerely appreciate your leadership, your service and your advocacy for our children. Best wishes to you as you deliberate your next steps and recommendations. You have my support.

Sincerely,

Patricia F. Deklotz, Ph.D.
Superintendent